

TOWN OF MANSFIELD

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

MINUTES OF DECEMBER 3, 2007

Present: Carl Schaefer, Bruce Clouette, Mayor Paterson, Helen Koehn, Matt Hart, Jeff Smith, Cherie Trahan

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

The meeting began with the minutes of the November 13, 2007 minutes. Since Bruce was not at that meeting and Alison Blair is not here tonight, the committee decided to defer approval of minutes until the next meeting.

Jeff Smith reviewed the proposed budget adjustments, including a discussion of estimated additional revenues and estimated funding requirements. Bruce Clouette questioned whether we had allocated enough of the additional Educational Cost Sharing grant to Education. Cherie Trahan responded that yes, we had met & exceeded the amount required for educational support. Motion was made to recommend acceptance of the proposed budget adjustments to the Town Council.

The Committee discussed how and when items for discussion should be distributed to the full Council. It was decided that the Town Council should get the information at the same time the Finance Committee gets it for review. However, it should be clearly marked "DRAFT – FOR DISCUSSION". That way, should a Council member wish to attend the Finance Committee meeting, they will have the information on the item being discussed.

Carl Schaefer led the discussion on the Community Center and the Parks & Recreation Fund.

Cherie Trahan reviewed the financial statement structure; Jeff Smith discussed “hidden subsidies”; Mayor Paterson discussed the space allocated to programs. Bruce Clouette discussed that the town has been committed to providing a recreation staff (as we have through the General Fund) and that programs should cover their direct costs. Jeff explained that we have a six week study planned to look at the Community Center operations, so that we can make it as efficient and profitable as possible. Carl expressed that the goal is to have this study complete by the time we work on the budget. Bruce recommended that the Finance Committee forward the attached report to the Town Council as an informational item at the next Council meeting, including the comments from our auditor on the CC financial statements. Matt Hart expressed his thanks and acknowledged of the work of Finance staff in more clearly defining the Parks and Recreation program. Carl also suggested that such thanks be expressed by the Town Council. Cherie confirmed that the quarterly financial statements for the Parks & Recreation Fund will be reported in this format in the future.

Bruce Clouette also noted that when the Community Center was built, we expanded the Parks & Recreation program to include aquatics when we provided a pool for community use and that is where a vast majority of our costs are. The need for a community gym was also addressed at this time.

There was a brief discussion on the \$72,000 that was erroneously dropped from the program staff salary budget for Day Camp. Carl recommended that we defer the discussion until we get more information back from Curt Vincente (ie, savings from a staff resignation). Also it would be helpful to have the results from the operations study. Bruce expressed that this was a sizeable error and how do we go about preventing this from happening again. Cherie suggested a procedure for verification of the budgets by the department heads once they have been entered in the Financial System and reported in the budget document. We will implement a process for review and sign-off. Jeff will also remind the department heads that they need to keep a close eye on their budgets and give Matt and himself a heads up if they see any potential problems with the current year budget.

Carl recommended a regular meeting schedule for the Finance Committee. We will meet once a month (at 6:00pm) preceding the first Council meeting of the month.

Matt noted that Region 19 had a budget meeting with the First Selectmen/Mayor of the member towns on Thursday evening at the Region 19 Library, 7pm. A discussion of an

alternative method for levying the member town contributions would be included. All are welcome to attend.

Motions:

Motion was made by Bruce Clouette and seconded by Carl Schaefer, to recommend acceptance of the proposed budget adjustments as attached to the Town Council. Motion so passed.

Motion was made by Bruce Clouette and seconded by Carl Schaefer to adjourn. Motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cherie Trahan

Controller/Treasurer